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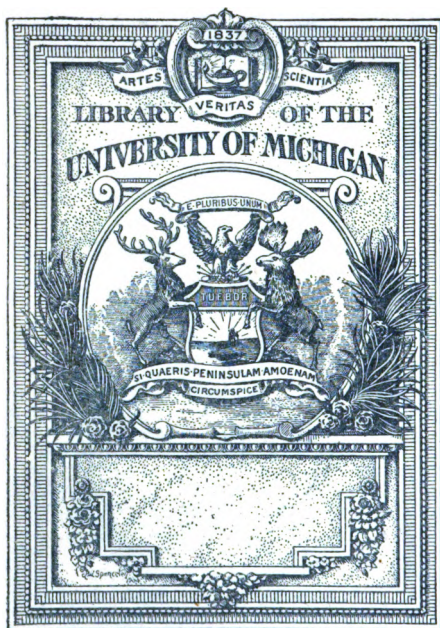
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# **LAND AND SEA PIECES**



# LAND AND SEA PIECES: POEMS

By ARTHUR E. J. LEGGE



JOHN LANE: THE BODLEY HEAD  
LONDON & NEW YORK. MDCCCCIV

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# **LAND AND SEA PIECES**



## LA JEUNE FILLE

I WATCHED you lead your dogs across the lawn,—

A wave of sympathetic tails and noses,—

You moved—in hackneyed language—like a fawn,

And—true to the convention—gathered roses,

Romped with your canine court, began to sing,

Threw down your hat, and disarranged your  
tresses,—

In fact were just the well-known winsome thing

A jaded world pokes laughter at—and blesses.

And I, your old tormentor, will proceed

To persecute you sore with mock compassion

B

Because artistic pedants change their creed,  
And you are altogether out of fashion.

You used to be the poet's foremost theme,  
The leading part in plays, the note of novels,  
Now you are nothing but a schoolboy's dream  
Or idol at whose feet some dotard grovels.

Our modern taste cries out for stronger food,  
And you, my dear, are merely bread-and-butter,—  
Art interrogative explores the nude,  
Draws back the curtain, and unbars the shutter,

Examines, probes, dissects,—and, right or wrong,  
We show you things they did not show your  
mother,

Nor suffer bright delusions very long,—  
Oh, I am just as bad as any other,

And scorn to whisper underneath my breath  
Aught that I take for truth, however cheerless,  
Believing pain or pleasure, life or death  
Can teach one doctrine only—to be fearless.

Moreover there is nothing strange or new  
When age meridian waxes sentimental  
Before a fair young innocent, like you,—  
Such aberrations are but incidental.

And yet you are so delicately sweet,  
With your wide sea-blue eyes, remotely serious  
Through all their laughter, with your lips that meet  
In lines firm, pleading, joyful, sad, mysterious,

With your quaint eyebrows and your thick, soft  
hair,  
Your slender, graceful form, and all the wonder

Of that pale half-transparent rose-bloom where  
Your cream-white skin shows the blood moving  
under,

That suddenly the laughing mask is torn  
With fierce power from me, while, abashed and  
lowly,

I seem to hear reproachful voices borne  
On faint winds breathing through a temple  
holy,

And all the haunting secret of your face,  
The spiritual burden, ghostly splendour,  
Drive out my wanton thoughts, and in their place  
Passionless love grows, mystic, humble, tender,

Till I would almost change my whole life's plan,  
Renounce my conscience, let my creed be shaken,



No longer search the absorbing riddle man,  
Nor toil for honest truth—howe'er mistaken—

If only what I write the privilege won  
Of shaping your pure dreams, of building stronger  
That fairy palace reared against the sun  
The world yet holds for you,—for me no longer.

Ah yes, though loaded years of joy and pain  
Winnow my hopes, my softer fibres harden,  
Call me to mountain-rocks above the plain,  
Or wilderness beyond the sheltered garden,

Spite of the surging undertones below  
The homelier triumph of life's orchestration,  
To be your laureate I could almost go,  
Apostate, to poetical damnation.

## OLIVIA'S GARDEN

OLIVIA's Garden !—Shakespeare weave

Thy brief enchantment longer ; hold

Unbarred the gates of make-believe

For grown-up children, wearied, old.

The chime of rhythmic language ends,

The radiant lovers link and pass,

One moment, ere the baize descends,

Leaves the clown piping on the grass,

Then all is over. Yet the stream

Of light and laughter round me brings

No rude deliverance from the dream

That fans my soul with fairy wings,

As through the jostling throng I press  
Towards the play-house door, and glide  
Into the crowded loneliness  
Of London's homeward-rolling tide.

Still, in the garden of my thought,  
Exemplars of eternal youth  
Are breathing words of passion fraught  
With ancient, elemental truth.

I hear triumphant love declare  
Faith whose perfection purifies  
The allurements of a woman's hair,  
The mocking mystery in her eyes.

I view that unforgotten land  
Of early fancies where Love rules,  
And commonplace is contraband,—  
A perfect paradise of fools,—

And sharply cruel comes a thrust  
Of eager longing,—half regret,—  
To know that under all the dust  
The lantern may be burning yet,  
That sympathetic sexual choice  
May bear the value poets claim,—  
All life being else an idle voice,—  
A painted film,—a shade,—a name,—  
While true love round enfolded souls  
Weaves lightly such a silken mesh  
That guardian happiness controls  
Each changeful passion of the flesh.  
All are but dreams, so let me take  
This best and fairest dream for true,—  
Life paying, for one soul's pure sake,  
To Love perpetual revenue,

And faithful hearts, unused to tire  
Of that one tax, nor levying toll  
On provinces of chance desire,  
Who keep the ethereal compact whole.  
An out-blown lamp the vision dies,  
Slain by the power that brought it birth,—  
The pleading gaze of women's eyes,—  
The rippling music of their mirth.  
I watch no garden, hear no tones  
Of love melodious, but awake  
To tread the grimy paving-stones  
Whereon the shattered billows break  
From that discoloured, quivering sea  
Of women, whose white womanhood  
Has sold its fragrance for the fee  
Of lustful pleasure, ruthless blood.

Wan is the softness of their smile,  
Their voices lack the true caress,  
They claim no homage, but beguile,  
With grim, commercial earnestness,  
Experienced man and fledgling boy  
To sensual feasts of low delight,—  
Strange vestals of unlovely joy,  
High priestesses of appetite.  
With faint pain biting at my heart,  
I break from your lascivious throng,  
My scape-goat sisters, kept apart  
To chant the fleshly syren-song,  
To give the grossness of our world  
A play-ground,—till it changes form,  
And you to outer darkness hurled,  
Appease the prayerful, prurient storm.

Olivia's Garden !—Must we hold  
Such gardens purchased with the price  
Of goods in yonder market sold,—  
A Minotaurian sacrifice,—  
Or may we shun the tragic mind,  
And lightly count the accustomed shame,  
Reckoning that all womankind  
Have found realities the same,  
That, deck or daub it how we will,  
With woven flowers or plastered mud,  
The central fact is constant still,  
Mere harvest-growth of flesh and blood ?  
Look how the golden globes of light  
Make jewelled clusters through the dark  
Vague space where gas-lamps gleam so bright  
Across the hushed, deserted Park !

Surely, for those with eyes to see,  
The arrowy rays that bend and dance  
Are infinite in their mystery,  
And eloquent with all romance.

For light is light from lamp or sun,  
Fresh beauty blooms from worse decay,  
To the great river, one by one,  
The trickling gutters find their way.

Yet where the house-piled barrier ends  
At the white archway, yon festoon  
Vulgarly luminant offends  
Before the unearthly April moon,

That lies with cold, pure face serene  
Enthroned above the naked boughs,—  
Pale emblem of what might have been,  
Bride unrevealed our hearts espouse.



And in the silent darkness there,  
Where silvery veils of moonlight fall,  
My spirit looks to find, somewhere,  
Olivia's garden, after all.

## HORTON

MILTON lived here !—The word suggests  
A fund of observations trite,  
Such as the mild scholastic breasts  
Where platitudes are welcome guests  
Would fain invite.

And we, unqualified to claim  
Superior mental rank bestowed,  
May talk, with no pedantic shame  
Of what might happen if he came  
Along this road,

And joined us in our walk without

Our knowing who he was, and cast  
The lightning of his brain about  
Our topics, as he did, no doubt,  
In days long past,

When someone, on his homeward way  
To Staines or Datchet, overtook  
The rambling scholar, by the grey  
Mysterious twilight charmed to lay  
Aside his book,

And lured him into chance discourse  
Of daily trifles,—this and that,—  
Of rabbits under yonder gorse,  
Of yearling heifer, half-bred horse,  
And such-like chat,

And left him, just as we should do,  
    With all his greatness undiscerned,  
And thought him rather good to view,  
But dull and solemn,—never knew  
    The light that burned

Behind the beautiful, austere  
    Young face, the puritanic garb,  
The language classical and clear,  
That sometimes wounded with severe  
    Sarcastic barb.

For Milton was but ill-advised  
    To climb Parnassus ere the brood  
Oracular had criticised,—  
Unparagraphed, unadvertised,  
    Uninterviewed.

No printed wisdom bade him wear  
The crown, and yet he hardly sought  
For approbation anywhere  
Beyond himself, and did not care  
What people thought,

But wandered here through field and grove  
Forgetful of the world at times,  
Searched his great dreams, and only strove  
To please his conscience when he wove  
Immortal rhymes.

These fields are haunted: over all  
Broods the vague sense of things unseen,  
Of harmonies whose rise and fall  
He heard, whose whispers yet recall  
That which has been.

c

The landscape bears but common fame,—  
Flat English meads, whose homelike views  
In Milton's time were much the same,  
Yet out of them the voices came  
That stirred his Muse.

When sunset reared a crown of fire  
On Windsor's line of woodland there,  
His thoughts were as a chanting choir,  
He played, with language for his lyre,  
A wondrous air.

When marsh-born vapours rose around  
He gave them shapes we shall not see ;  
He gathered from this pasture-ground  
Orchestral notes whereon to found  
A symphony.

His murmured music robbed the lark,  
And stole the blackbird's evening thrill,  
And echoed, to the distant Park,  
Each nightingale when oaks were dark  
On Cooper's Hill.

For him the river wafted down  
The tones of a majestic creed  
From Eton, with her scholar's gown,  
By yellow sedge and bulrush brown  
To Runnymede.

Old guardian Castle, throned on high  
Above your timbered slopes afar !  
You stand against the western sky  
A symbol, binding days gone by  
With days which are.

C—2

Plantagenet and Tudor strode

Along your terraces ; the flower  
Of martial courtliness abode  
Behind your battlements, and rode  
With pomp and power

Through Horton's ancient hamlet, sure  
Of recognition, homage, praise,  
While one was dwelling there obscure  
Whose laurels through the years endure  
Beyond *their* bays.

Yes, though your feudal aspect brings  
The ghost of earthly greatness near,—  
Courtiers, and trumpeters, and Kings,  
And parasites, and other things,—  
Milton lived *here*.



## THE DEATH-MASK OF LEOPARDI

    WITHIN this outworn shell  
A fragment torn from the universal Soul  
Was dungeoned for a while,—a sword too keen  
    For carnal sheath's control,  
Shaped, branded, tempered in the fires of Hell,—  
And we, whose faith proclaims that all is well,  
    Ask why the thing has been.

    God! But it wrings the heart  
To ponder such a life;—a brain on fire  
With that which makes great poets,—with wide  
    thought  
    And infinite desire  
And shy wild passion roaming far apart

22 THE DEATH-MASK OF LEOPARDI

In unfamiliar solitudes of Art,—

Tortured and over-wrought

By this corporeal cloak

That, like the tainted robe of Nessus, wrung

With agonies the wearer, made his song

The saddest ever sung,

Where earthly life becomes a cruel joke,

The load of an intolerable yoke,

The hopeless reign of Wrong.

Poor martyred child of grief !

They say there was a sweetness in your smile

That showed how love broke through your bitterness.

And though degraded, vile

Men looked too often, yet your unbelief

Gleaned from their stubble souls a tiny sheaf

Of those you had to bless.

Mis-shapen, frail, diseased,  
 You crawled along life's highway, wondering  
 How men could name existence a good gift,  
 When all it seemed to bring  
 Was pleasure's counterfeit that never pleased,  
 And fugitive delight that none quite seized,  
 And sympathies adrift.

Yet was not your despair  
 All barren ashes or unfertile sand,  
 But proved a very fruitful garden soil,  
 That yielded to your hand  
 A wealth of bloom so wonderful that ne'er  
 With tears and blood was watered anywhere  
 A nobler field of toil.

This put the balance straight.  
 A soul, beyond our nature sensitive,

24 THE DEATH-MASK OF LEOPARDI

With more than human suffering hammered out

White hot the words that live.

Surely you paid the price, however great,

With secret understanding of your fate

Though anguish cried in doubt.

That heart, which knew no joy,

Won power o'er countless hearts it soared above.

That weary mouth no woman ever kissed,

Though hungering for love,

Poured out the language lovers yet employ

To shape their thoughts in music; girl and boy

Learn from you notes you missed.

Passion is born of pain

And pain of passion,—so things intertwine.

You, to tormenting fires of genius doomed,

Thereby grew half-divine,

For all which clogged the beating of your brain,  
Futilities of pleasure, sensual, vain,  
Were in that glow consumed.

And yet who knows?—who knows?  
I wonder is there anything so good  
As this world's rarely granted fruits,—by you  
Scarce touched or understood.  
Could all your gifts outclass the gain of those  
Whose car triumphant down the broad way goes,  
Bathed in delight like dew?

Could all your dreams afford  
Aught to compare with passion's coldest kiss,  
Or one brief hour upon a woman's breast?  
And is there any bliss,  
High on some snowy mental mountain stored,

26      THE DEATH-MASK OF LEOPARDI

Like that wild kingdom's joy where Youth is lord  
And Laughter makes her nest ?

Ah, let me conquer doubt !  
To suffer and to sorrow more than most  
Has been the poet's privilege through all time,  
To leave the vulgar host  
Who follow Comus in unlovely rout,  
And search through that dim shadow-land without  
For something more sublime.

Think what their lives have been,  
Under your luminous Italian sky !  
A hunted, outlawed, lonely, homesick race,  
Whose fortune went awry.  
Though they might stand above their grief serene,  
What does the phrenzied gaze of Tasso mean,  
The look in Dante's face ?

Just as the nightingale  
Was said to rest her bosom on a thorn,  
And from the ecstatic anguish of the wound  
Her haunting notes were born,  
So by the hearts that pointed woes impale,  
Whose triumph and whose tortures do not fail,  
The noblest lyres are tuned.

For joy is near akin  
To grief, and rapture close to agony.  
There is no certain line 'twixt life and death,  
But imperceptibly  
Waves ebb and flow.—Sorrow and pain and sin  
Has each the flower of beauty shut within,  
That opens at a breath.

And though we may not read  
The secret now, yet would my heart proclaim

Envy of you,—not pity's insolence.

Out of the gloom you came,  
High priest of pain's majestic unknown creed,  
With weird rites woke, yet soothed, the human need,  
And proudly bore you hence.



## A BISCAYAN VISION

Who has words to paint the splendour where the  
moonlight weds the sea,

Winds a cobweb cloth of silver round her limbs,  
yet leaves them free,

Robes her all in bridal whiteness, clasps and folds  
her lovingly?

Burnished field of liquid silence where our vessel  
toils and ploughs,

Panting like a goaded bullock, thrusting with her  
stubborn bows

Headway through the virgin waste that bears and  
spurns a thousand prows,

Surge of cloven water murmurs constant as a  
rushing stream,  
Mingled with the dull mechanic throbbing from  
the heart of steam,  
Rocks our souls to wakeful slumber, charms them  
in a living dream.

Sudden falls a misty curtain, softly glides across the  
moon,  
Blots the gleam of wrinkled waters, drapes in many  
a grey festoon  
Waves whose rounded swell reflected stars that  
fade like eyes aswoon.

Darkened light or lighted darkness !—phantom  
world beyond a shroud !

Surely there are ghosts within these magic draperies  
of cloud !

Something wakes the yearning voice wherewith my  
spirit cries aloud.

See—the answer !—Slowly, proudly, through the  
veil of shining haze,

Spars and masts of bygone fashion, sails unfurled in  
older days

Shape a stately progress bearing down the moon's  
unearthly rays.

Dreamily distinct and vivid, ere they vanish, all  
around

Ships,—more ships,—a mighty squadron moving  
with no movement's sound,

Spectral shapes of all the fleets that e'er across the  
Bay were bound.

Just a moment gleams the gilding on some quaint  
uplifted poop,  
Pennants flash and heavy folds of battle-flags for-  
gotten droop,  
Here beside a frigate's mast-head, there above some  
gliding sloop.

Weirdly beautiful the glimpse of this old floating  
warrior-host,  
Symbol of such buried pride, so lost a pomp, so  
cold a boast,—  
Ah, the silent guns whose thunder echoed on the  
distant coast !

Vaguely though the crowded mass of yonder fleet  
be seen and felt,

Should the vision try to single one ship from that  
circling belt,

Blurred and curtained 'mid the ghostly multitude  
her lines will melt.

Like the myriad stars above us carpeting the  
Milky Way,

Countless ships in white confusion flicker through  
the haunted Bay,

Older than the Roman galleys, young as barks of  
yesterday.

How the longing grows to hail them, hear some  
Captain's grim reply !

Surely there are moving figures ! Surely comes a  
floating cry !

Oh, my pale and voiceless brothers, tell me of your  
lives gone by !

D

Ye who sailed and fought with Cæsar, ye who  
swept the main with Drake,  
Dane and Saxon, Frank and Spaniard,—all who  
kept the world awake,  
Battled with the tameless ocean, loved it for the  
danger's sake,

Lived for just the worth of living, failed and  
conquered, laughed and died,  
Matched the raging wind in anger, faced the sun  
with kindred pride,  
Wrestled with the lonely Spirit dwelling on the  
waters wide,

\* Answer !—Answer !—Give me greeting ! me  
whose soul is all athirst,

Panting for your larger freedom, pining for the  
strength to burst

Clumsy bands that hold me from you, links my  
straining heart has cursed.

Silence answers,—and the wash of broken water  
there below,

Rippling back to leave our course a path of foam  
like driven snow,

Baffled flakes, that tried to hold us, flung behind  
with master throw.

Like a folded veil the sea-fog rolls itself towards  
the stars,

Sweeps away the sails in smoke, unbinds the  
rigging, breaks the spars,

Clears the sea of all but moonbeams fit for mer-  
maids' window-bars.

Void the pale transparent vastness, holding nought  
but eerie light,  
Mirrored on our deck like glow-worms where it  
turns the dewdrops white,  
Making ours the only phantom-ship upon the sea  
to-night.



## RALEIGH'S LAST VOYAGE

THE slow-swung cabin-lantern marks the tread  
Monotonous of Time's advancing foot,  
Just as a pendulum tires with dull beat  
Some sick man's eye. Hour piles her weight on hour,  
And lame day shuffles into night. Beyond  
The port-hole heaves and foams that weary sea,  
Condemned to everlasting, vain unrest.  
Muffled and vague, perpetual noises drift  
Into the rocking cabin,—hasty tread  
Of footsteps on the deck, the flap of sails,  
The creak of cordage hauled, the rudder's groan.  
One only thing seems quiet,—a bent grey head

Whereon the lantern-rays fall dim, when night  
Blots ocean's pallid gleam.

Anger, all spent,  
Hope killed, ambition broken, all the flowers  
Of life turned brown and trampled,—guarding only  
Some shreds of pride, the old undaunted heart,  
Raleigh goes home,—home to the snarling throng  
Of enemies, the craven, treacherous King,  
Foul hatred's legal masquerade,—and Death.

O'er the white wake of foam the sea-gulls dip,  
A shade less grey than the sad, darkening sea,  
A shade less grey than thought, pale, haunting  
thought.

Faint clouds take form, and drift, and disappear,  
Lost in the hazy sky. The dusk comes down,

Blurs the clear line of shrouds, enfolds the mast,  
 Darkens the shaded sails. A warning gleam  
 Of signal-light goes out to touch the top  
 Of, here and there, a rolling wave, that else  
 Were covered up, like all this restless world,  
 In soft, suffusing gloom.

It is not sweet,  
 This blank, despairing sense of overthrow,  
 It is not sweet to find each vista barred,  
 Backward or forward, by the hooded shape  
 Of grief. Behind,—the long corroding years  
 Wherein captivity rusted good limbs,  
 Then brief deliverance, reckless final throw  
 Of dice on Fortune's table—and all gone.  
 Forward,—victorious foes, dejected friends,  
 The wounded lion crawling back to his lair,

Fingers that point derision, low, hard yelp  
Of courtly jackals, the triumphant mask  
Of the long-toothed, vulpine Spaniard,—oh, kind  
God !

Courage,—more courage yet to face it all !  
With what fierce, envious longing will the heart  
Review that fatal tropic forest-land  
Where Raleigh's first-born buried lies, and where  
Lie buried Raleigh's hopes,—the old, wild hopes,  
Lit by white burning of a poet's brain,  
Warm with the glow of an Adventurer's dream.  
What more could bruise the woman-heart at home,  
Dear, brave companion of once glorious days ?  
She lent to Fortune all her treasure ;—how  
Does Fortune recompense the debt ? Indeed  
It had been better if the father's bones  
Lay by the son's, so that his death-sealed ears

Heard not the sobbing of these mournful waves,  
That lap against the vessel's side, and moan  
"Defeat," "Defeat."

Night comes, and fresher wind,  
That sets the frigate reeling as she tacks,  
Picking her homeward path so daintily  
Through unkempt, ragged waters. Sleep at last  
Makes harbour for that tempest-weary brain.  
Yet even to her calm port turbulent winds  
Blow threatening voices on the wings of dreams,  
And sleep, half-madness and half anodyne,  
Paints shapes to be forgotten on the clouds  
That race through fancy's sky. Contorted thoughts  
And nightmare memories of late, past days  
Hover in wheeling circles round ;—suspense  
Of that long vigil on Guiana's coast,

Sick body helping not sick mind to bear  
The blank of tarrying news,—then, deeper gulf  
Than no news, the returning worn-out band,  
Whose cloud of dark depression struck down hope,  
Like the black sail of Theseus, when it slew  
The old Athenian king ;—and then the hell  
Of fierce recriminations, blame, revolt,—  
More blood, more death, more misery,—and, at  
last,

The sullen setting forth of listless men  
In sea-worn, faded ships, the slow, dull walk  
Of days that beat them up the Atlantic coast,  
The surly faces, wrathful muttering tongues,  
Suddenly tuned to voices mutinous  
In thundered menace, through the fogs that shroud  
The iceberg-haunted Island of the North,  
And he, the proud commander, unbeyed,

Driven to plead, surrender, abdicate  
Impregnable authority.—What dreams !

So wears the night to day and day to night,  
Processionally mournful as the wash  
Of these attendant waves, or trivial sounds  
And sights of daily ship-life, that recur  
With changeless iteration ;—wonted cry  
Of sailors heaving at a rope, sharp clang  
Of ship-bell, strange, impersonal report  
On time's progression chanted by the watch,  
Flutter of bunting, to the obedient fleet  
Casting her leader's orders, droop or spread  
Of canvas, grunt of pulley, thump of block,—  
Repeated all,—and in the unquiet brain  
The wheel of repetition turning thought.  
  
Ah, to be old ! to feel no more the juice

Of youthful resolution surge and mount  
Warm through the time-gnawed trunk,—to feel  
no more

The stir of hope with each awakening  
From dreamless nights,—to know the last edge  
turned,

The last fall taken in Life's tournament.  
There is no earthly sadness quite like this,  
Even for bravest hearts. The golden cup  
Where wine once foamed now serves for opiate  
drugs,—

Endurance, resignation, faith,—whose power  
May force the threatening thunderstorm of grief  
To grumble in the distance, but must fail  
To light the extinguished sun of yesterday.  
Such sadness governs not, for courage rules  
Till death, so Raleigh hopes, and weariness



Numbs the pierced heart ; but still desire looks  
 forth,

Like frantic Ariadne on the shore  
 Of Naxos, claiming from life's pitiless sea  
 The joys it bore away. Acceptance hard,  
 Never again to lead majestic  
 The floating pomp of England's battle-line ;  
 Never again to ravish unknown seas,  
 Or search mysterious and reluctant shores  
 For coyly guarded secrets, fabled wealth ;  
 Never again in rival courtliness  
 Or learned emulation to outshine  
 Wit's paladins or fashion's hierarchs ;  
 Never again to feel the burning blood  
 Leap at Love's shy unveiling ;—all is dust,  
 All roads approach the grave. Yet will not he,  
 Lordliest of Adventurers, bewail

This last adventure coming ; he, whose goal  
Was ever things unseen, whose playground lay  
Ever in lands unknown, will proudly pass  
Those dark and intricate straits to where *That* lies  
Whose shadow shapes the words,—Unseen, Un-  
known.

Yes, at the thought, old fire exuberant  
Throbs through the bosom, lights the faded look ;—  
Still are their waters whence no sail has come,  
The last and greatest Ocean unexplored.

Day after day the ship goes wandering  
Across the Atlantic plain, all loneliness,  
Save where a porpoise leaps or spouts a whale,  
Seeming eternal wilderness of brine,  
Eternal sameness and eternal change.  
At times she bounds and quivers amid the whirl

Of Mænad waters, in their phrenzied dance  
 Tossing wild locks of foam, and noisily  
 Flying before mad Bacchanalian winds.  
 Then, like the heart of her great Admiral,  
 She reels beneath the fateful buffetings,  
 And all her timbers groan. There is no peace,  
 No rest,—the long, laborious, struggling crawl  
 Up the great, green wave's side, the wrenching  
     pitch  
 When bows come bursting into spray-veiled air,  
 And every oak-heart trembles, ere she dip  
 Plumb to the further slope beyond the boil  
 Of the billow's frothy crest,—and then the slide  
 Down, down into the yawn of that great gulf;  
 Again the plunge and shock and jarring strain,  
 Then hoisted bows,—like sinewy shoulders heaved  
 Swift by a leaping horse,—then all once more,

Wave after wave surmounted. And meanwhile  
Unearthly voices yell among the shrouds,  
And rent waves toss Medusa's hissing hair,  
And all the infernal choir comes up from Hell  
To shriek their cruel anthem tauntingly  
In Raleigh's ears, while he, with haggard frown,  
Looks out at Ocean's wild Walpurgis-night,  
And hears the uproarious voices, wondering.

And then, at times, come sunlit, gentle days,  
When wrathful green and passionate foam-white  
No longer stain the water, but, a sheet  
Of silken undulation, softly blue,  
The great kind Ocean heaves with long-drawn  
breath,  
Rocking herself to slumber. Then the ship,  
Like a slow, stately swan, rides lazily

O'er each round bank of moving ocean-swell,  
 Clear and translucent vaults of deep cobalt,  
 Lustrous like beds of turquoise, and thick pearls  
 Of snowy bubblings underneath the keel.  
 Then to the grief-worn heart a calmer mood  
 Comes, like narcotic numbness preluding  
 Some opium-eater's dream. And past life hangs  
 A fair-framed picture upon Memory's wall,  
 With all the cruder colours fading out.  
 Yes, they were worth their pleasure those dead days,  
 And worth their price, though Fortune now demand  
 Truly a Shylock-payment. That which *was*  
 No failure can make null ;—the reckless joys,  
 Insatiable ambitions, burning hopes,  
 The power, the pride, the triumph !—They may go,  
 Fickle as wanton women, but sometime  
 Have they been Raleigh's indisputably

E

To embrace, to enjoy ;—cold, they can ne'er unlive  
Their nuptial night, nor take their kisses back.  
Joy, once possessed, remains, a frozen flower  
In cleaving amber of Remembrance shrined.

Thus leisurely pass on the sauntering hours,  
Till one uproarious storm-day brings in sight  
Land, through a revelry of rain and foam,  
And, shoreward forced, unwilling, timorous ships  
Chased by the barking wind, like frightened deer,  
Double and plunge along the threatening wall  
Of cliffs that rampart Ireland. So they speed,  
Much buffeted, beside the bare green hills,  
Where, here and there, some lonely cabin dots  
The rain-soaked surface. Suddenly upheaves  
White broken edge of ocean, rearing high  
Ladders of foam against the guardian rocks

That push them tumbling, with slow, gentle scorn.  
 Peril so looming picturesquely close,  
 The draggled fleet beats onward to Kinsale,  
 And there finds harbour. Royal Nemesis,  
 Here is thy destined judgment! Raleigh comes,  
 Raleigh,—once dreaded, powerful, arrogant  
 Master on Irish shores,—now crushed, condemned,  
 Half-captive,—hiding in an Irish port  
 The remnants of dominion lost and last,  
 His battered funeral fleet.

Oh, weeping land,  
 Whose lips are salt with tears, whose bosom lies  
 Nakedly helpless under Fortune's wind,  
 Who clasp sad children in your blood-stained  
     arms,—  
 Ever was pain your hard inheritance

And sorrow your companion. Ireland!—turn  
Your tear-lined face to pardon, pityingly,  
Your harsh, great-hearted tyrant. You have been  
Man's helpless victim,—lust, oppression, wrong  
Have ravaged your worn heart, long used to bear  
Anguish, alike for fierce unnatural sons  
And coldly cruel strangers. Misery  
Alone can teach compassion. Let the smile  
Holy with all forgiveness, light once more  
Your wild and sombre beauty! Let your breast,  
Your tender, false, rebellious, trustful breast,  
Hold him in kindly shelter! Hate not now  
This broken, white-haired warrior, whose hot youth  
Swept o'er your soil with slaughter. If his road  
In life with blood was sprinkled, equally  
His own blood marks the trail. Forget,—forget  
A brave man's ruthless days, and let him dream



Of peaceful hours and that dear friendship nursed  
On Mulla's banks, when poet walked with poet,  
And Spencer's tune was matched on Raleigh's  
tongue.

Poor "Shepherd of the Ocean !" fugitive  
From blighted pasture-lands, he gathers home  
Few sheep and sickly, with his broken crook.

Now flutter forth again wave-beaten ships  
To tramp their final stage. It is late Spring,  
And days grow long, and pirate east winds sheathe  
Their cruel knives, and, growling many a curse,  
Slink back to barren steppes and ice-bound wastes.  
Yes, it is Spring in England,—ripe, green Spring  
In Raleigh's own West Country, whose rich hills,  
Leashed in their wild rock-girdle by the sea,  
Each hour brings nearer now. His heart goes back

On billows of remembrance, capturing  
The loved, familiar landmarks. Ah, those days  
When every flower breathed promise, when the dew  
Glowed with reflected hope, and cool dark streams  
Mirrored brave Fancy's pictures, when warm blood  
Beat like a drum for coming battles ! Here  
Are hearts unchanging and unchangeable.  
No Devon man has wavered ; all are true  
To him whose fame garlands the Devon stock.  
No kingly, Scotch buffoon, but Raleigh reigns  
In cloven valleys amid sapling oaks,  
Where the wood-pigeon's soft contralto cry  
Answers hoarse baritone of calling rooks ;  
Where shaggy, rust-red cattle climb the steep  
Green slope that ends in sky, or ruminant  
Knee-buried in luxuriant meadow-grass  
Beside the winding river ; where tall herons

Wait, statuesque, for ruby-spotted trout.

And on the heather-purpled moorland wastes

Where antlered kings hold court; and on the cliffs

Where shag and sea-gull house; through all the  
land,

The sweet, damp pasturage and apple-land,

Whose strong, amphibious sons alike could chase

A Spanish galleon or a hill-side fox,

Is Raleigh named and honoured. Were but theirs

The ruling voice of England, with what hope

Might he come sailing into Plymouth Sound!

Alas, hope's light has paled like clouded stars,

When Raleigh's bark, with omen-laden name,

Rides at her final anchor. He must tread

The pathway of the Shadow, take the last

Farewell of earthly seas. Fierce, desperate,

His brain will scheme for life one battle more  
With any weapon, plan, or stratagem ;  
That failing, he will breathe a nobler spirit,  
And go to death as martyrs die. Poor world  
Of baffled phantoms ! Have our deaths and births  
Much meaning after all ? Well, here at least  
Passes a man moulded in Life's red fire.  
Fate weaves a chequered groundwork for such  
souls ;  
Dark, transient Evil ;—bright, eternal Good.

## CLEOPATRA IN ROME

CLEOPATRA ! Cleopatra !

Through silken hangings the low wind stirs  
Like a passionate sigh from those lips of hers  
That have kissed hot fools to their death ; she lies  
Watchful, with her glittering eyes  
Turned to the marble court ; the gloom—  
Rich with colour, breathing perfume,  
Thundrous in heavy, whispering hush  
Of soundless fans, and the swaying flush  
Of clouded curtains, that catch the gleam  
Of a vagrant, weary-winged sunbeam,—  
Veils her half-robed limbs and her throat,  
Browned on the golden sands remote  
By the desert daylight, and that thick hair,

Vaguely tossed in the darkness there,  
That droops with many a straying tress  
To brush the pale voluptuousness  
Of her bare, smooth bosom. The day is spent,  
And the sun draws near to his purple tent  
Behind the darkening, clear-cut hill  
On the rim of a landscape lying still  
In passionate, fevered slumber ; soon  
Will night's lamp-laden slave, the moon,  
Guide to the lithe queen, panther-curved,  
A lover whose footstep shakes the world.  
And she waits, with throb of her eager brain  
Hot for the clash with a master's mind,  
While the blood-beat aches in each rebel vein  
That kingly reason in dreams to bind,  
And hold him passion-blind.  
Cæsar ! Cæsar !

Cleopatra ! Cleopatra !

Out of the twilight comes alone  
The uncrowned ruler who makes her throne  
Seem but a sparkle of make-believe  
In the web that a school-girl's fancies weave,  
A toy forgotten. How would she tell  
The various motive-threads of the spell  
He has woven to hold her ? Watch him there,  
Clinging to some of the dandy's air,  
With his elderly neatness, careful drape  
Of robe, trim sandals, lean spare shape,  
Thin locks over baldness laid, grave style  
Of courtly bearing, and wrinkled smile,—  
But ah ! with the brow of a lord of men,  
Throat of a monarch, firm lips that pen  
Kingly command in their close-shut breath,  
And eyes that are looking through life and death !

Yes, it is love that he wakes, although  
One faint chill discord rings in the glow  
Of blood's delirium. Could but the trace  
Of faded beauty in that worn face  
Bloom to its former wealth ! Could lines  
Of assaulting age's countermines  
Melt, like gossamer threads from the grass  
When fiery hours of summer pass !  
Can *she*, whose sensuous fancy swims  
In waves of passion,—she, with the limbs  
And the parted mouth and the eyes of fire  
And ever-burning bosom's desire,—  
Can she bask in the evening sun, nor long  
For the ardent noon-day's thunder-song !  
Yet the shade of doubt dies dreamily  
Before his tender, questioning gaze.  
What of time's ravage !—This is *he*



Who chains her soul with his master-ways,  
And laughs at load of days,  
Cæsar ! Cæsar !

Cleopatra ! Cleopatra !  
Harboured safe in those long, soft arms,  
Her cooling touch, like an opiate charms  
Slow, dull pain from his forehead,—the weight  
Of labour, strife, and dreams, that of late  
Have made sleep come, as no foe e'er came,  
Foreboding terror, threatening shame.  
He yields her a despot's right to rule  
The mind that none could bewitch, befool.  
No helpless prisoner, swayed and bent  
In tyrant passion's abandonment,  
But, master still, he suffers her kiss  
Of haughty, fierce, imperiousness,

With a smile, all tender but half-sad,—  
Loving with laughter, wearily glad.  
Not for his life-worn heart the glow  
Of passion's sunlight on virgin snow.  
He has read in the book that all men read,—  
Though none could interpret,—and the creed  
He has learned there hopes not much divine  
From the dispensation feminine.  
Love is the dice of the Gods. He takes  
His chance, but will not forget the stakes.  
Reading her thoughts, he drops one sigh  
To the manly beauty of days gone by  
When women would love him for his limbs  
And the eyes whose ardour time now dims,—  
Though the thought dies out in a gentle laugh,  
Sculpturing boyhood's epitaph.  
To wince from wounds like that were a jest;

But, biting deeper into his breast,  
Is a faint strange sense of aching void,  
Of pearls imperfect, of gold alloyed.  
The uncompanioned heart that has wooed,  
Yet found no mate in its solitude,  
Almost grudges the price of the throne  
Where genius sets her children—alone.  
Yet he lets the vessel of reason drift  
On the sea of fire poured from her eyes,  
Lazily taking the Gods' good gift,—  
While she, though burning, has wit to prize  
This lover, calm and wise.  
Cæsar ! Cæsar !

Cleopatra ! Cleopatra !  
Hours have passed,—it is afternoon  
When, from a long deep sleep like a swoon,

The flushed Queen wakes to the warm delight  
Of fresh life dawning after the night;  
And her languid thoughts play lazily  
With the last remembered time, while she  
Smiling lies with her brown arms bare,  
And thinks who kissed her dishevelled hair.  
Some strange influence surely crept  
Over her senses before she slept,  
When this faded, wasted lover could hold  
Her tangled in meshes manifold,  
Such as no beautiful youth has twined  
Across her strong, voluptuous mind.  
And she builds up drowsy, pleasant dreams,  
And paints a gallery of bright schemes,  
For power and conquest makes her plan  
Over and through this master-man.  
When sudden floats to her ears a cry,

And a far, sad tumult drifting by,  
And the wail of slaves, and halting tread  
Of timid footsteps, as though men fled;  
And angry, startled, she springs alert,  
Vaguely afraid of treacherous hurt,  
When into her sunlit chamber creeps  
A favoured, intimate girl, who weeps  
Prostrate before her, and, frightened, tells  
A tale that deafens like jangled bells.

And rage and sorrow darken her eyes

In a mist where hands are groping, red  
With the blood of a royal one who lies,  
Kingly enough, with his shrouded head;—

Cæsar !—betrayed and dead !

Cæsar ! Cæsar !

F

## EURYDICE

THE breakers were like grey despondent things  
That tossed wild hair, and, raging hopelessly,  
Leaped on the grim, disdainful rocks, and fell  
Shattered and weary back, with whisperings  
Of some strange message that they might not tell,  
Some sorrow-burdened secret of the sea,  
With long care sheltered under their white wings  
In guardianship for me.

Ah, but I took their meaning. Faint and blue  
Along the liquid world's horizon spread,—  
Almost as though 'twere floating poised in air,  
So like were sky and water,—I could view

The coast of that sweet, sun-bathed country, where  
You loved to wander ;—and I bowed my head.  
For, scarce beyond mine eyes' sad range I knew  
That you were lying dead.

Cut was the tangled skein of your short life ;  
Darkened were your deep eyes ; your warm heart  
cold ;  
Your fair young face to marble turned ;—oh, grief  
Can shape not thus, as with a carver's knife,  
Your dear, dead image ! Death had bound his sheaf  
And stored his harvest ;—so the tale was told,  
Only I prayed that you were bruised with strife  
No longer as of old.

So I sat dumb before the surge and boil  
Of water, casting foam-flakes at my feet,  
And felt the sunlit sadness of the day,

F—2

Remembering your brief and tragic toil  
Along life's road, and how you used to say  
You had found bitter all that should be sweet.  
For one great want was ever there to spoil  
The picture incomplete.

You had so much that other women ask,—  
Love, homage, power, amusement, interest,  
And foolish hearts to trample on at will,  
And vital wine from Fortune's jewelled flask,—  
But for Love's true surrender were you still  
A seeker, vainly tortured by your quest,  
And your proud laughter only served to mask  
The void within your breast.

Men loved you,—men whose love was no light gift.  
You played with it, and, like a broken toy,  
Cast it away, and turned to search once more



For final perfect passion that should lift  
You to those heights where all that passed before  
Would melt into the radiant song of joy  
From your long-looked-for Orpheus, with no rift  
The lute-tone to destroy.

Orpheus ! Ah yes that ancient legend seemed  
Somehow with your most modern story blent,  
Like throb of mournful harp-strings breaking  
through  
Fuller orchestral sound. I sat and dreamed  
That the forlorn, forsaken soul was *you*  
Whom Hades held in loveless banishment,  
Seeking by every pallid light that gleamed  
The way your lost one went.

Poor lonely, pale Eurydice !—you cried  
For him to hear and hasten, but your call

Sadly unanswered rang through that dark place,  
Save when faint echoes tauntingly replied,  
Or, lonely too, some white ghost turned a face  
Of hopeless, voiceless pleading,—but the wall  
Of black mist curtained off that world outside  
Where no such cry could fall.

And now you reach *some* portal, and who knows  
What you have found beyond it? Have you passed  
Into a fairer, sunnier land than yon  
Sweet France you loved so? Have you found  
repose  
Of soul, and is the weary feeling gone  
That numbed your life? And has your Orpheus  
cast  
The web of magic music that he throws  
And swept you in at last?

Ah me ! 'Tis idle work to speculate  
And question that dumb Oracle who stands  
Before the door where ends all human breath.  
It may be that no earthly love or hate  
Haunt the dim cloisters of thy temple, Death !  
That, whirled away on passion's drifting sands  
Are those vague joys for which we supplicate  
With stretched, appealing hands.

It may be we shall find ourselves awake,  
And rub our eyelids sleepily, and laugh  
To think that we were fretful and perturbed  
About the childish trifles that we take  
So hardly now ; that we could once be curbed  
By passion's fears, and find its hope a staff ;  
And o'er our old dead sorrows we shall make  
A mocking epitaph.

All things are possible,—and none we know.  
I turned from that impenetrable veil  
Which hides, but cannot hush, the wings of Hope,  
And, through the murmur of the waves below,  
I thought once more to hear your sad voice grope,  
Bearing its plaintive burden, and the pale  
Reflected flakes of sunlight seemed to show  
Your eyes with their wild tale.

Oh, comrade unforgotten ! Have you found  
That which you looked for ?—all the hopes you told  
To me, the friend you trusted in far years,  
Your sometime pilot, privileged to sound  
The surface-laughing ocean of your tears ?  
I have some sacred memories to hold  
In ward for you, a little volume bound  
With clasps of purest gold.

I could not help you then, nor now I may,  
Who were so very helpless, yet so brave,  
In those unhappy, joyful, reckless times.  
I have no garland I can give to-day  
Except my poor unheard, unheeded rhymes,  
Precious because you cared for them, and, save  
For that, a very withered gift to lay

In silence on your grave.

Yet I believe you know the thoughts that grew  
When slowly home, before the setting sun,  
I walked along the cliff, until the sky  
Grew dark, and stars came out ; and wet with dew,  
My pathway seemed of tears. But *yours* were dry,  
Your earthly trouble hushed, your conflict done.  
Across the bay, a last salute to you,  
Thundered the evening gun.

**“THEY THAT GO DOWN TO THE  
SEA IN SHIPS”**

**SLOWLY** going from the crowded quay,  
With all its noise and glare,  
The long ship turns her head to the sea,  
And the harbour-sounds die dreamily  
In warm, illumined air.

Tall, anchored vessels are vague and fade,  
And pale, reflected light,  
In bars o'er the dark smooth water laid  
From pile and pier,—with the moon to aid,—  
Passes into the night.

Blurred land goes back, and a mounded swell

Shatters the mirrored stars,

And tumbles the lighted buoys, that tell

The roadway, ringing a float-borne bell,

That weirdly clangs—and jars.

But silence comes, till never a sound

In the ghostly hush is heard,

Save eager pistons that thump and pound,

And the wash of water rippling round,

And cry of some dim bird.

And the vast and starry temple grows,

With gleaming, swaying floor,

And the startled soul looks out, and knows

That here Time's brief adventurer goes

Through the mysterious door

76    THEY THAT GO DOWN TO THE SEA

Of that great innermost shrine, whereto  
    Each priestly pathway leads,  
Where Man learned all that he ever knew  
Of things beyond, and the myths that grew  
    Slowly into his creeds.

Stars and sea and the night are a veil,  
    Through which we seem to grope  
For steps that lead to the altar-rail  
Guarding the fires, that will not fail,  
    Of sacramental Hope.

With feet earth-planted, our faith dies down  
    To scarcely heeded qualms,  
A whisper caught from the strident town,  
A faint truth seen through the bigot's frown,  
    Or heard in his dull psalms.



But here, where the moon's inspiring light

Silvers the windowed waves,

With a plank 'twixt us and the Infinite,

Over the field of an endless fight

That fills uncounted graves,

The hard, material logic seems

Poorer than cabin-lamp,

In face of the radiance of moonbeams,

And, tented safe in their clear white dreams,

Our souls must fain encamp

On ground of super-sensual thought,

With mystic sword and spear,

For earthly knowledge will count for nought,

And spectral foes the old prophets fought

Perilously draw near.

78    THEY THAT GO DOWN TO THE SEA

Even as the Hebrew poet sung

    Is ocean's solitude,

Now haunted, as when the world was young

By spirits, using an unknown tongue,

    Who tune us to their mood.

On galley-benches, under the whips,

    Cowering Roman slaves

Looked up for the new Apocalypse ;

And Norsemen, steering their dragon-ships,

    Asked it of Baltic waves.

The Spaniard, bathing in blood and fire

    The name of Holy Church,

Letting his hope to a priest for hire,

Yet felt the glow of a strange desire,

    And knew the seaman's search.

And men who starred with their names the roll

Of sea-girt England's fame,

Rough, salted fellows, who left the soul

To chance till the Reaper claimed his toll,

Sought what they ne'er could name.

Ever the unanswered question asked,

Ever the weary cry

Of hearts whose courage is over-tasked

By the haunting Presence, veiled and masked,

Felt in the darkness nigh.

Our quest is the same as theirs, who strove

To talk with more than men

In Jewish temple or Pagan grove,—

Osiris, Odin, Jehovah, Jove,—

We seek Him now as then.

80    THEY THAT GO DOWN TO THE SEA

But, doubtful of deities who scourge  
    With thunderbolt and rod,  
We picture One who shall calm the surge  
Of our spirits' ocean, and emerge  
    A gentle, smiling God.

Out to the sea and the night we reach  
    Appealing arms, and pray  
For a Friend to hear our human speech,  
A heart to answer, a Voice to teach,  
    A Hand to point the way.

And the sweet sea-murmurs make reply,  
    So tenderly confused,—  
Like a nurse to children,—and the sky  
Is even as some kind creature's eye,  
    Compassionate, amused.

Gently chiding, they awake the sense,  
Of something more than joy  
And more than sorrow,—a confidence  
That marks the course of our passage hence  
Surer than chart or buoy.

We feel it a nobler task to sail  
Over an unknown sea,  
With hope and courage that will not fail,  
Than to pray for Heaven to rend the veil  
Shrouding the mystery.

Enough for us to have felt life's glow  
Fanned by the moving Breath  
Abroad on the waters, ere we go  
To learn the secret that lies below  
The land-locked waves of Death.

G

## PROMETHEUS

WE seem to watch the vague white dawn unfold  
In rolling wreaths of mist along the crags,

And soon

The pale belated moon,  
Who still behind her starry henchmen lags,  
Is pelted forth with javelin shafts of gold  
By the fierce sun,  
Sweeping above the saw-backed mountain-chain  
To drop his fiery lances, one by one,  
On to the waking plain.

And slowly we discern Thy worn, proud face,  
In all its undefeated agony,

Thy mood,  
No torture has subdued,  
Of scornful freedom,—though Thou art not free,—  
The fire that lights Thy haggard eyes, the grace  
Of Thy bound limbs,  
Cramped with long pain,—ah, let the picture stand!  
Nothing in all our later knowledge dims  
This dream from an old land.

Thou art the deathless type of them who dare  
To beard an unjust tyrant and defy

The hate  
That holds their earthly fate  
In its foul grip,—of them who ne'er comply  
With craven counsel, pleading false yet fair,  
But stand alone

When others cringe and fawn and compromise,

G—2

Facing the Wrong whose right they will not own  
With uncomplaining eyes.

Their tombs are marble mile-stones on the road  
Nations have trod to freedom. Their names ring  
Through tales

Cherished in lonely dales  
And mountain homes,—through songs the people  
sing

Behind the plough, or with the harvest-load.

Like stars they gleam  
Out of the human gloom and storm-clad past,  
And in the march of many a youthful dream  
They sound a trumpet-blast.

We know them all of old. But who can claim  
Descent in line of true succession now  
From Thee



Who taught men to be free,  
Who let no brand of serfdom mark thy brow,  
Who bade thy fellows loose them from the shame  
Of ignorance,  
Thwarting the Oppressor who would keep them  
bound,  
And by Thy torture purchased their advance,—  
A martyr lightning-crowned ?

For Despots quake upon their thrones, and Kings  
Act in the People's playhouse and must earn  
Applause

From those who make the laws,  
And Priests no longer now have power to burn  
Disputants deaf to their admonishings ;  
And even they,  
Whose gold enslaves our vulgar world and rules,

More than a monarch's sceptre, cannot sway  
Any but their poor tools.

Ah no,—the new Prometheus will oppose  
A stronger, subtler tyranny,—the voice  
Of mobs

Wherein blind passion throbs,  
The crude, coarse blunders of the public choice,  
The veering wind rhetorical that blows  
In daily print,  
Folly and cant and clamour, dullness fed  
On waste of weak emotion without stint,  
Hard heart and too soft head.

He will not stand against the tyrant One,  
While dumb but grateful multitudes upraise  
His thought  
With sense of their lives bought,

With silent love that speaks in wordless ways.

Austere and stern the duty to be done,

In loneliness,

Misjudged, reviled, deserted, ridiculed,

With many tongues to curse and few to bless,

And none by reason ruled.

Chained to a colder couch than Thy bleak rock

On frozen Caucasus, no Herakles

Shall rend

His galling bonds and end

The punishment of him who will not please

The loud-voiced shepherds of the foolish flock.

But he will wait

Conscious of that whereto his thoughts aspire,

And to his Tyrant's dupes disseminate

Thy nobly stolen Fire.

## STELLA'S COTTAGE

**THEY** say she lived here. True or not,

'Tis certain that, like faint perfume,  
Remembrance hangs about the spot

Of her old graceful buried bloom.  
These fields and woods and yonder stream  
Were setting for her girlish dream.

Somewhere on this green land she grew

Into that sweet, mysterious thing,  
Ripe maidenhood, and slowly knew  
The wondrous knowledge years will bring  
Even to modest maids who eat  
Bread of dependence,—none too sweet.

For here one crossed her sheltered path,

Whose fortune shared her servitude :

Lord of a heritage of wrath,

Of power untamed, of genius crude,—

A writhing Titan, shaped in pain,

Seared by his own white-burning brain.

She alone saw the tortured pride,

The smouldering rage, the shielded scorn,

The yearnings daily crucified,

The chains by fierce ambition worn.

Her gentle soul could comprehend

His fate, who had no other friend,

Only a patron,—not unkind,

Weighted with that dull cleverness

Which clothes the true official mind

And stamps the common-place success,

Who deemed the uncourtly Swift, no doubt,  
A talented and learned lout.

And all the Moor Park guests,—the men  
With stars adorned, with ribands girt,—  
The type, as now, rewarded then  
For kinship, wealth,—and *some* desert,—  
Would hope Sir William's goodness prized  
By the rough youth he patronized.

And that same graceless youth, the while,  
Measured and weighed them in his thought,  
And pondered, with a savage smile,  
On value borne by things of nought,  
On lucky dips in Fortune's bowl,  
And how the part exceeds the whole.

And, raging with the bitter sense  
Of life's injustice, he would seek

In irony his recompense,

His fury screened behind some freak  
Of scornful wit,—a lonely jest  
Gibbering through his hollow breast.

But the satiric phrenzy lost

Its power to poison and corrode  
His fiery spirit, when he crossed  
Her threshold and laid down his load  
Of sleepless mutiny, that tore  
His heart and left an unhealed sore.

Her tender presence seemed to cast

A calm on that discoloured sea  
Of wan emotion, where the blast  
Of anger thundered sullenly.  
Her voice, like David's harp, could roll  
The storm-clouds from his darkened soul.

Her eyes, untutored, saw the worth  
Of this great crooked, gifted mind,  
Which dazed the pompous lords of earth  
With flashing wit, that left them blind,—  
In its unlovely strength alone,  
A hunchback crowned on reason's throne.

And thus the famous tale began  
Of her love's tragic sacrifice  
To one half god, yet less than man,  
With brain of fire and blood of ice.  
Cruel that her white feet should miss  
The common road of happiness !

Yet all things have their price. She gave  
Her love for some few years, and earned  
A name, thereby, beyond the grave,  
A shrine where candles yet are burned



By worshippers who know the task  
Of them that give—but never ask.

And this meek maiden stands among  
The immortal lovers ;—she whose smile  
Lost Troy, and she whom Virgil sung,  
And the dread Serpent of old Nile  
Were all her sisters. Gentle heart,  
In what strange company thou art !

## EVERSLEY

ALL the prophets are dead  
Who moved like ghosts in the hazy dawn of our  
youth,  
Where questioning souls toiled after them, com-  
forted  
By the hope of a cloudless truth.  
In this yew-tree-guarded plot by the pathway lies  
One of our early captains. Now, to the eyes  
Weary with life-long watching and dim with old  
tears,  
He may lose some span of the stature of those years,  
He, and our other giants,—the warrior sage,  
Whose fierce heart, warped in the flame of its  
honest rage,

Yet taught us a creed of courage, weighing the  
worth

Of heroes that bear the sword of God upon  
earth,—

And he, who, drunk with beauty and light as with  
wine,

Stirred us with rich, wild speech of his phrenzy  
divine,

Art's lightning-veined Dionysius ;—too well I know  
New wisdom pointed her scorn at them long ago,  
Showing the flaws in the work and the faults of  
the men.

There may be no voices to hail them, no knee to  
bow

At shrines made sacred for us by their worship  
then,—

But who are your prophets now ?

All the prophets are dead.

Lingering sunbeams aslant on the white stone cross  
Paint us an epitaph,—more than the words we  
read,—

Telling our greater loss.

Not for the leader alone, whom we never knew,  
We sigh, but for buried dreams, the visions that grew  
To cover the world like a veil and hide grey things  
That we wanted to walk apart from,—bargainings  
In love and honour, the low ambition, the lust  
For wealth and its tawdry pleasures, the fouling dust  
Where idol-worshippers crowd on their temple-  
stair,—

Alas! now these things are plain to us everywhere,  
And the dreams are few,—yet are they living, and  
come

Just when we fancy that all the voices are dumb,

Save those of the market-place, and we cry aloud  
For one with wide clear eyes to walk forth from  
the crowd

And speak as these dead men spoke, till the world  
shall turn

From the shams and the cant and the comfort her  
children sought,

To desires that only in hero-hearts may burn  
For things which cannot be bought.

Prophet! come soon! come soon!

We scarcely seek you, we who are crossing the hill,  
Whose way goes down to the pale mist under the  
moon

In the valley where all is still.

But those who are coming behind us,—ah, they  
need

H

One who will move as a pillar of fire, and lead  
Their souls through the waste of a world where  
died old faith,

Where men are toiling darkly to follow its wraith  
Or setting up dismal things that perish for gods,  
Save here and there, where some lordlier spirit  
plods,

Away from the beaten road, through the wilderness,  
To look for a newer Eden ; the vulgar stress  
Of life may seem to have deadened all higher hopes,  
But under the gold and the garbage Man's heart  
gropes

Now, as in every time, for deliverance  
From the sensual cage, and broken-winged he pants  
For the power to soar. If only the world could  
hear—

This coarse, material world,—an authentic voice

Bidding it watch, for a new Messiah was near,  
The world would heed and rejoice.

Old dogmas are outworn  
That he taught in this little church ; and all creeds  
die ;  
And teachers pass ; and the lesson-pages are torn,  
And the dusty books laid by ;  
But, at least, this man has helped us to hear the  
note  
Of the wordless song whose wandering murmurs  
float  
From fields that the sunlight splashes with golden-  
brown  
As it plays on the shocks of corn, from woods that  
crown  
The sloping ridges, from meadow and lane and heath,

H—2

1101

And crowded pines, with a blush of heather beneath,  
And the stream where the fat trout lie;—oh, here  
is rest

From the world, with its fevered brain and panting  
breast,

And Youth comes back with its visions, and that  
sweet dawn

Of Hope, that lighted the dew upon dream-land's  
lawn,

And set all the colours aflame in the garden-beds  
Where the flowers of love and glory lifted their  
heads,

And we see the land we had lost, and forget the din  
Of a jarring age, and learn the wisdom anew,  
That tells how only the losers in life shall win

And only the dreams be true.

W. H. D.



## MERMAIDS

“ ALL the lights are burning bright.”—The cry of  
the watchman floats  
Hoarsely aft, through the tangle, vague and  
blurred,  
Of cord and spar and crane and winch and shapeless,  
sheeted boats,  
Half-guessed, half-heard.

Star-illuminated darkness lies in a thick transparent  
veil  
On lumbered deck and slowly heaving bows ;  
Vision of dim chaotic sea and foam-streak, faint and  
pale,  
The light allows.

As though some buried lantern gleamed up through  
the vault of brine,  
Suddenly all is ghostly flame below,  
Where fish-stirred, phosphorescent flakes of water  
seethe and shine,  
Coldly aglow.

Like an uncurtained window spreads the strangely  
lighted sea  
Over the pallid fire and spectral things  
That whirl through molten stars and poise in a  
liquid mystery  
Their weightless wings.

Through the luminous surface comes a glimpse of  
trailing hair  
And wistful, haunted mouths and eager eyes,—

Surely each ripple flashes on familiar faces there  
Before it dies !

Sweet unforgotten forms that drift out from the  
perished years !

Pages written once in a secret book !  
Palimpsests from the burning pen that passion  
dipped in tears,  
Where none may look !

Ah ! but you tell the life-long tale of ever-  
smouldering fire,  
And far, sweet dreams, and darkness where we  
grobe,  
And ache of uncompanioned hearts, and slumberless  
desire  
And wounded hope.

Sometimes there are souls that come to this alien  
world by chance,

Following up a twisted, baffling trail,  
Chasing a jack-o'-lantern light, that lives to shine  
and dance

When all lights fail.

They seek the phantom shape that flies before and  
is not here,

The loved, desired, and dreamed-of one they  
know,—

Unseen, unheard, untouched,—yet felt so often  
moving near

Like cloud-borne snow.

And, while their brief earth passage lasts, from time  
to time they halt,

Feeling hope flash hot through their weariness,

Thinking, "Here is a kindred soul, with neither  
flaw nor fault,  
I must not miss!"

Dear eyes that answered smile for smile, you carry  
no faint cloud  
Of dim reproach! dear mouths, that love has  
sealed

With sacred kisses, not one sigh comes from you,  
firm and proud!

Old wounds are healed.

We soared and failed, and fell once more headlong  
back to the earth,

And paid another toll-bar tax of pain,  
But those wild joys, that died so young after their  
lurid birth,

Were much to gain.

We have lived and laughed, and known at least the  
flavour of Love's wine,  
E'en from a flagon torn away too soon,  
And, though the sun of dreams and dewy day no  
longer shine,  
Night brings the moon.

Love looks yet from the smiling eyes under the  
water there,  
Love, where pain and passion are both asleep;—  
But the gleam fades, and glides the ship to darkness,  
everywhere  
So dumb! So deep!

## ELLE ET LUI

I WONDER if you know the well-known tale,  
Like most true tales, half sad and half absurd,  
Of how the stormy pools of love were stirred  
By two great children of the Muses, plumed  
With crests of genius, that might nought avail  
In this one enterprise, nor save them, doomed  
To stab of love turned traitor, and the wrench  
Of faith uptorn ; two noble figures blurred,  
Disguised, theatrical,—and very French.

Are you and I like that ? You never had  
Much vision for the ludicrous, and now,  
Angrily scornful, you may wonder how  
I dare suppose that you,—or even I,—

Could furnish food for laughter in those mad  
Past days. Forgive me! One must laugh or cry  
When things go ill,—so let me drive a jest  
Across our withered harvest, like a plough  
Hiding dead stubble in Earth's Autumn breast.

You know De Musset's poems?—tender, sweet,  
But overloaded with the sensuous pain  
Of sorrow half enjoyed; he lives in vain  
And rather likes it;—though a truer tone  
Rings, I should fancy, through the stately beat  
Of those fine lines wherein he walks alone  
With memories of her who held, apart  
From all his other loves, imperial reign,  
And broke, perhaps, his somewhat brittle heart.

And she had *her* own statement of the case  
Whose rights and wrongs are buried now. The thing



Only has power to set me wondering  
If delicate, artistic natures feel  
Deeply as those nearer to commonplace,  
And may not from their own emotion steal  
A sense of drama they are looking at,  
And find a certain morbid pleasure spring  
From parts they play. Are you and I like that?

How hard it is, in these self-conscious days,  
To thrust aside that ever-threatening fear.  
Even in our laughter are we insincere?  
You never cared for laughter much. Perhaps  
George Sand was also tuned to serious ways  
And knew not self-approval's grim relapse.  
But did De Musset see his own shape pass  
And not suspect a histrionic sneer,  
A presentation of the Tragic Ass?

I know not, care not. In this Autumn time  
Each fading leaf, each golden-mantled tree  
Such anguish of remembrance bring to me  
There is no room for self-analysis  
And mocking doubt. I see the great moon climb  
Up the dark sky ; I see the sunset kiss  
Pine-woods like that you showed me ; I behold  
The mist turn purple ; but I do not see  
Her who in Autumn walked with me of old.

This is no acting now ;—I wish it were.  
I think my powers of make-believe are numb,  
And I can only wonder, dazed and dumb,  
What has befallen. It is passing strange  
That we should still be living and aware  
Of thought and breath. Have we not known a  
change?

Are we not parted now? And was it *you*  
Whose soul across my dream-land used to come  
With white feet bathed in love's transparent dew?

I know this obvious world as, in a swoon,  
One hears faint voices. But remembrance yields  
A far more vivid world of brown, wet fields  
And park and garden, and an old walled home  
Vague in the dusk beneath the rising moon,—  
Or wakes the roar of friendly waves that foam  
Under the tall cliff-rampart of the downs,  
Where the long slope of lonely silence shields  
Our spirits from the taint of hateful towns.

But now am I an exile and may look  
No longer on the fair, proud face that pressed  
Like a sweet living flower upon my breast,  
Nor hear, with you, the husky rustling sea,

Nor watch our evening star. In that closed book  
I read no more. Something is gone from me.  
I am a shattered idol, and my day  
Is over. For the splendour that you dressed  
My deprecating soul in, I must pay.

I claimed no halo; I desired no crown;  
Nor asked to stand upon the pedestal  
You reared for me,—though I foretold my fall.  
But, judged, condemned, I enter no defence  
Nor plead for any softening of your frown.  
I cannot even play with the pretence  
Of kneeling penitent. Degraded, rough,  
Animal,—what you will,—I gave you all  
I had to give;—and it was not enough.

I talk of giving; think not I forget,—  
Dear, lavish heart,—the splendid gift you gave,

Tender and reckless, womanly but brave ;  
And I am glad you gave, and cannot feel,  
Even now, for that sweet season a regret.  
I may have crushed Love's flower with clumsy heel,  
But you had cheapened Love before that time,  
And though my truth and fervour could not save  
Love by my passion stained, you shared the crime.

But I have wandered widely from my text,—  
De Musset and George Sand !—I hardly thought  
The theme would prove so personal. I ought,  
With calm, impartial spirit, to explore  
The problem, and forget pale ghosts that vexed  
My soul with their reproaches. Nevermore  
Can these cold ashes glow with that which fed  
The fire within them. Sunny dreams we sought  
Fade into joyless gloom. Our love is dead.

Our love is dead. God!—do you understand  
What the word means? The happy, trustful ways,  
The sweet companionship, the sacred days,  
The dedicated thoughts, the emotion shared,  
The high hopes guarded, the great labours planned,  
And, ah!—the shy, veiled tenderness that dared  
To search Love's holiest temple;—all are gone.  
Our souls are floating hulks the current frays,  
The brine corrodes, the harsh winds beat upon.

Our love is dead.—But, no!—Love cannot die.  
Passion is dead,—desire, and hope, and trust.  
We both have wrongs to pardon, and the rust  
Has gnawed our broken chain beyond repair.  
But some small freehold of Eternity  
We bought for Love, and proved his title there  
With pure and faithful service. We have been

Blinded, befooled,—but not by lies or lust.

Our robes are draggled, but our hearts are clean.

Of small account our few remaining years !

Of small account ourselves, our crippled lives,

Our weary hearts. There is a force that strives

Constant, persistent, through the march of Man,

Feeds on his blood, grows wider with his tears,—

A changeless current since the world began,

A swelling flood time may not turn nor stop.

And what last dew of our dead love survives

Adds to that sacred stream one precious drop.

We may have erred,—but error fades like foam

On banks beyond each rippling eddy's rim.

We may have stumbled,—but the light was dim.

We may have failed,—but Failure has her crown.

Truly we worshipped under Love's great dome

I—2

And at His altar laid our rich gifts down.  
It may be that our souls shall come to dwell  
United, healed, and sanctified, with Him,  
The last high Eros.—So, then, fare you well.



## MICHAEL ANGELO

WE have little enough of his work, you see.

These two he never finished are all,

Save the canvas there, on the other wall,

Of his paintings; while for statuary

Some copies in plaster I recall

In our meagre national store of casts ;

We might give them a visit, too, one day.

If the present turn of your fancy lasts,

And you care to steal some hours away

From the round of pleasure that claims your time

For something more sublime.

Pardon my banter ! Your laughing eyes

Cloud with a faint, reproachful shade

At the mocking accusation made.  
And the most minute of possible sighs  
Creeps through your curved, red lips, afraid  
Of its own existence.—“Love of Art  
Is a thing that, I please will understand,  
Has played in your life a leading part.”  
But, though I be reprobate, outcast, banned,  
You do *not* belong to the stock, you know,  
Of Michael Angelo.

Dear, mirthful woman, daintily fair !  
Watteau were likelier, I should guess,  
As the guardian-priest of your loveliness.  
The very curl and droop of your hair,  
Your clothes and your jewels and scent express  
Something, as clear as the Master's paint,  
Of a graceful, idle, delicate world,

Far from the dreams of Seer and Saint,  
Where all the flaring banners are furled,  
Where the uglier colours of life have paled,  
And human hearts are veiled.

Suspect no critical tone! I dwell  
So much in that self-same world, and take  
My part in its pleasure, and rarely break  
From its bounds; for I like it passing well,—  
Though I go there mostly for your dear sake.  
Are we not lovers—after our kind,  
Playing the game as our fellows do,  
Sometimes passionate,—never blind,—  
Unforgetful,—and fairly true?  
I give my heart—as much as I dare,  
And you,—in your strange way,—care.

You, on the whole, are content enough  
With your atmosphere, though you may have  
laughed  
Sometimes at the sparkling wine you quaffed,  
Finding it heady, chemical stuff,  
And longed, perhaps, for a purer draught.  
I shrug my shoulders, and acquiesce  
In things that are. I believe the bond  
For us is a common weariness,  
A light despair of the things beyond.  
We meet with laughter the ancient curse,  
Knowing it might be worse.

But *he* was a very serious man,  
This grim old painter of mighty themes,  
Who dwelt apart with eternal dreams,  
Working out life on a lonely plan,

And finding it greater than it seems.  
He would hardly choose in our world a place  
For planting his nature's rugged roots,—  
He owned no flavour of drawing-room grace,  
And used to sleep, they say, in his boots,  
And washed too little, no doubt, and lost  
Much that is worth its cost.

But he gained one treasure,—all else above,—  
The absorbing purpose, the deathless aim,  
The high aspiration ever the same,  
Stronger than pleasure, ambition, love,  
Lighting his path with a magic flame.  
What did he gather that we have missed ?  
Loneliness ? Poverty ? Labour ?—Dear,  
Even the fortunate lips you kissed  
Must own to the claim of that life austere.

I would follow,—with you, if the Gods allow,—  
If not,—follow anyhow.

For *we* have nothing,—derelicts tossed  
On the sea where our captain hopes were  
drowned,

Where the winds like taunting voices sound.

You are a mourner for one you lost,

And I for one I have never found.

We owe, as comrades, with truth and faith,

But if love be *all*,—life's total and end,—

Each of us chases a dubious wraith,

Half a lover and half a friend.

The part is no gain if you miss the whole,

Supposing you have a soul.

Ah me! When that plaintive voice of yours

Yields me the song I have loved for years,

I can hear the ceaseless dropping of tears  
In the rich voluptuous stream it pours,  
And the mask of your laughter disappears.  
And I know that your soul imprisoned weeps  
For the world that glimmers beyond the bars,  
Till the earthlier side of your nature sleeps,  
And your thoughts go winging towards the stars,  
Looking for Art?—Love?—Some great thing  
Dominant while you sing.

For Art and Love are but words, that mean  
Something over-profound to contain  
In symbols shaped by the human brain,  
When once you inhabit that air serene  
Where life goes suddenly straight and plain.  
This painter here, who had strength to choose  
The harder pathway, nor turned aside

For things *we* never could bear to lose,  
Knew, in his patient, humble pride,  
That he gained them all, in a deeper sense,  
Multiplied,—more intense.

But he was abnormal, you object,—  
Had genius,—moved by different laws.  
It may be. The Universal Cause  
Has a very varied wealth of effect,  
And life, like glass, whatever its flaws,  
Shows the effulgence of light behind,  
Save when we wilfully cloak the gleam.  
There is a best of every kind,  
And each day carries a hidden dream.  
How I hunger to make the dream come true,  
And share its Heaven with you.



Sweetest woman I ever have known !

I could hate the tyrant passion that 'clings

To my soul in all its wanderings,

Whose fleshly, fiery meshes are thrown

Round my bedraggled, trailing wings.

Sometimes I wonder if Love be worth

Anguish and effort and thought we give

To the chase, that we make of our life on Earth,

After so cunning a fugitive.

Were it not better, the stern delight

Of this Artist-Anchorite ?

More and more, in this daily show,

This pageant of vanity where we walk,

With its greed and its glitter and foolish talk,

My spirit will chafe and my fancies go

From the scavenger-sparrows up to the hawk.

And I feel that an hour is drawing on

When the Voice no more can be disobeyed,

When I shall awake, with the glory gone

From this game in half-delusion played

By beings that know in their inmost hearts

How it irks to act such parts.

And I shall have done with the make-believe,

And bend my footsteps,—alone at first,—

To the wilderness and the dust and the thirst,

And the path where the brambles interweave,

And look for reality,—best or worst.

I shall couch, with a pillow of stony thought,

On the frost-nipped desert of self-control,

And shall buy the knowledge not to be bought

With payment less than a bartered soul.

Of my present treasure nought will I keep

Save laughter,—lest I weep.

But, from time to time, with a growing hope,

A clearer vision, a speech untied,

A passion lifted and purified,

I shall turn, on some moonlit night, and grope

Through the pale obscurity to your side ;

Not in this crowded town, but there

In your memory-haunted garden bowers,

When dew lies white on the grass, and the air

Is richly sweet with the drowsy flowers,

While you are dreaming of loves long past

And delight that did not last.

And, when you kiss me for old time's sake,

I will whisper all that I have to tell

Of the strange new country wherein I dwell,

Where hearts may almost forget to ache,

Where a great love, stronger than Heaven or Hell,

Might hold us, blotting our past desire,

As a feeble thing, from our thoughts, and lead

Our spirits on, to soar, to aspire,

To taste of life that is life indeed.

And, leaving the dead ghosts, frozen, dumb,

I wonder—will you come?

## THE GARDEN OF TEARS \*

SWEET were you, Fountain, though the name  
men gave

Your waters long ago had carried nought  
Of heart-ache and heart-rapture ; your clear wave  
Gleams through so fair a garden, and has caught  
Such tones ; and like a deep and crystal thought  
Lies the wide pool you feed. But fancy grows  
To fervour o'er your ancient title, fraught  
With passion,—“Fountain of the loves” of those  
Whose harmonies were played here to their cruel  
close.

\* Inez de Castro was the mistress, and eventually the wife, of the Infante Pedro, heir to the throne of Portugal. The courtiers of his father, Alfonso IV., were jealous of her influence, and murdered her by the *Fonte dos Amores* in the *Quinta das Lagrimas* at Coimbra.

K

Drowsy delight it is to sit and dream,  
This fair September morning, in the shade  
Of branches drooping o'er your dappled stream,  
And watch the distant grove of olives fade  
In golden blur the noon-day sun has made.  
And feel the whole world hushed, and hear the  
chime

From roof to roof of old Coimbra played  
In belfries, that repeat their chanted rhyme  
Like answering choristers, as wanes the slumbrous  
time.

And, reading stately lines Camoens wrote  
Engraved on yonder stone, mine idle brain  
Draws from dead centuries the tale remote  
That here was staged; and tries to picture plain  
Inez, dark-eyed,—perhaps a little vain,

Capricious, passionate,—but ah ! so kind,  
Aglow with all the sunny blood of Spain,  
Weaving her tender bands of love to bind  
The fiery Southern Prince whose rough gold she  
refined.

And here, beneath the plane-trees, they would  
meet,  
Sheltered from all the hard world's fretful jar,  
For stolen sweetness, ever the most sweet,  
For mortal dreams that yet immortal are.  
Time, with its pangs and burdens, could not mar  
Their perfect trust and fellowship, but crowned  
Their fruitful union with the radiant star  
Of parenthood, whose rich light wrapped them  
round  
With that most pure of joys humanity has found.

So, in this vale of tillage, years went on,  
A thread of peace across those warlike days,  
Vintages gathered, harvests come and gone,  
Ripe loads of fruit, and shock-head crops of  
maize.

And still Coimbra's hourly chime of praise  
Pealed to yon hills where green oak-forests stand,  
Marking the eternal Now,—that never stays,—  
For all such lovers in this sunburnt land  
Where blue Mondego twines dark o'er the yellow  
sand.

Then all was ended suddenly by men  
Scarce human, who accomplished their vile deed  
Here by the Fountain, running crimson then,  
On her whose life thwarted somehow their greed.  
And with that murder was the passage freed



For wrath and strife and vengeance, fiercely  
spread  
By Pedro, making a whole nation bleed  
In expiation of the dear blood shed,  
Till for a while his rage lay sleeping, though not  
dead.

Men called him "Cruel" afterwards, because  
Her slayers he with lingering torment slew.  
By God! I scarcely wonder if he was!  
Poor, gentle Inez? It was well for you  
To die in days full-blooded, when they knew  
Passionate love and hate. Vengeance may be  
Of Heaven alone the privilege and due,  
Yet no cold modern magnanimity  
Could move me like the fire of lovers such  
as he.

Ours is another age, and deeds of blood  
Seem but a vulgar folly to the wit  
Of those that hear the wash of that calm flood,  
Civilization,—even when they sit,  
As I, in places half-rejecting it  
With their unbroken rampart of romance.  
And yet our tepid passions barely fit  
Into this scene where such hot sunbeams glance  
On wavelets with a flash of battle when they dance,

Though formed for meditation and repose,—  
This Convent here in bygone days a nest  
Of holy womanhood, who gave the rose  
And kept the thorn,—thinking that God knew  
best,—

And those grey courts and cloisters on the breast  
Of yonder hill, where generations pass

The lamp of learning on, a sacred quest,—  
The cool, dark garden-paths, the sunlit grass,—  
Must human discord break their harmonies, alas !

Well, life is life ! He, though no suffering saint,  
At least could love. There was a later scene  
The kindest fancy could not fear to paint,  
When he, now Monarch, gave so strange a queen  
To Lusitania as had never been ;—  
The weird Court held at night, in torchlit gloom,  
Where he sat throned, and, at his side, serene  
In the mysterious beauty of her doom,  
Dead Inez, robed and crowned, a consort from the  
tomb.

And dazed, bewildered courtiers had to come  
And bow before the sceptred corpse, and pay

Homage to her enthroned there, dreadful, dumb,  
A statue modelled of no sculptor's clay,  
A Something, present, yet so far away,  
Gazing upon them with her dull, dead eyes,  
That mocked this earthly pomp and proud  
array,  
Scornful in their oblivion, strangely wise,  
Seeing beyond all fear and sorrow and surprise.

Well-guarded passions played amid that throng.  
Of high grandees and women nobly born,—  
Resentment for some unrequited wrong,  
Regret for bitter deeds and hearts forlorn,  
Envy and lust, ambition, anger, scorn,  
With love and hope, were wafted round the  
throne  
Of That, wherein all passions were outworn,

All joys forgotten, all desires unknown,—  
Eternally apart,—infinitely alone.

The gruesome mockery of pomp at last  
Was over, and one seems to know the sense  
Of vague relief that lightened souls aghast  
With half-admiring horror, too intense  
For long endurance, when they bore her thence  
Through multitudes of mourners and the flare  
Of countless torches, whose magnificence  
Filled the vast night and sent a haunting glare  
Across the land, to tell of love and great despair.

And nobly so they carried her to sleep  
At Alcobaça, among buried kings.  
Now she adorns a legend. But how deep  
Are planted roots of old romantic things !

In this calm garden the remembrance wrings  
My bosom with compassion, and I know  
These lovers and can hear their whisperings  
Through the light murmur of the Fountain's  
flow,—

Till sweetly, softly fades this dream of long ago.

## A SUBURBAN JUNCTION

UNDER the new-lit lamps the sloppy platform gleams

While murky smoke and dripping vapour blend  
To make a twilight foul as fever-blackened dreams,  
Veiling the huddled row of sheds the station seems,  
The aggressive, hideous foot-bridge at the end.

The coloured signals blink, the streaks of metal  
shine,

Far down the dingy track beneath the rain.  
Scene have I never viewed less noble, less divine,  
As, past the staring throng, I scan the distant line  
To seek the late and long-expected train.

In sudden, fierce revolt rises my angered blood  
Against the vulgar ugliness of things,  
Against the cancerous town, the smells, the din, the  
mud,  
The crawling, teeming life, the plants that never  
bud,  
The birds that cannot spread their crippled  
wings;  
  
Against the myriad folk like this dull group  
around,  
With bulging, wet umbrellas, dreary clothes;  
Against their narrow lives, their object never found,  
Their virtues and their vice by cramped convention  
bound,  
Their songs, their tears, their laughter, and  
their oaths.



But dies the thought in shame, and comes a rushing  
sense

Of humble, inconsolable appeal,  
Of hot desire to learn the wherefore and the  
whence,

To shape this broken pulp of nonsense into sense,  
The heart beneath the noise to hear and feel,

This brickwork, bare and blank, these ill-proportioned walls,

These roofs with all the slopes and angles  
wrong,

Hold an imprisoned voice that, wordless, pleading,  
calls,

Sustain mute echoes where some ghostly footstep  
falls,

And cage unsung the sweetness of a song,

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Who could not point you now each different  
Muse's home,

Where all poetic thought must come to birth?

With measurement and rule, in many a learned  
tome,

Has Culture everywhere, from Kensington to  
Rome,

Serenely taught the world her beauty's worth.

Poetic pilgrims turn their feet towards the lands

Which Art, by long succession, makes her  
own,

Where all may find the clay half-moulded to their  
hands,

And hear a language talked the dullest understands,

And know what those dead mighty ones have  
known.

W. H. D.

Ah, but I love you well, dear countries of Romance,

With all your garnered mystery of Time,—

Vineyard and olive-grove, folk-song and sunburnt  
dance,

Sea-plunder and crusade, sceptre and harp and lance,

The carillon of centuries a-chime !

Well might I care to tread the path by poets trod,

And wanton with old memories and dreams,—

Dryad, and laughing Faun, and happy pagan God,

The wondrous world whose life obeyed the  
Olympian nod,

And Tempe, and the pure Thessalian streams.

Sweet would it be to tell the testaments again

That men from other, greater lips have read,

To sing for them once more the haunting old  
refrain,

To picture scenes beloved and witcheries made  
plain,

And visions more than half interpreted.

But, as a symbol there, the grimy girders rest,

Like lattice-work, against the blank abyss,

Time's virgin Epigram, Destiny's cryptic jest.

Past prophets have revealed the wonder of the rest,

But who can tear the secret out of *this*?

Oh, Soul of Beauty, chained and captive under all!

Where is the fairy Prince to set you free

From these grim fetters forged of rail and roof and  
wall?

Gas-works and chimney-stacks, mud-stain and  
smoky pall

Hide you from eyes that have not learned to  
see.

But faithful hearts, may find your Temple every-  
where.

So let me make this halting-place a shrine,  
Pour out libations meet on this strange altar-stair,  
And through this chancel harsh breathe from my  
soul a prayer  
For insight, changing squalid to divine.

Could I but sing the words branded,—an unknown  
tongue,—

Oh yonder soiled and tattered page, ere long  
The weary world would dream of old things ever  
young,

And hearts, that have not stirred when other notes  
were sung,

Would waken, and be thankful for the song.

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